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# REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE SITUATION IN TAJIKISTAN

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1138 (1997) of 14 November 1997. It brings up to date the record of developments in Tajikistan and the activities of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) since my report of 10 February 1998 (S/1998/113).

## II. MAIN DEVELOPMENTS

2. During the past three months, the peace process has been disrupted by violence and has made only slow progress. The main step forward was the appointment, on 12 February 1998, of five members of the United Tajik Opposition (UTO) to cabinet-level posts. Further, on 27 February, Mr. Akbar Turajonzodah, deputy leader of UTO, returned to Tajikistan and was appointed, on 10 March, as First Deputy Prime Minister for economic relations with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). On 20 April, Mr. Abdullo Nuri, the UTO leader, submitted to President Emomali Rakhmonov the names of UTO representatives for appointment to the eight remaining national government posts. The Government has not so far submitted a list of posts to be allocated to UTO at the regional and local levels. UTO has not yet named its representatives to fill the 25 per cent of seats allocated to it on the Central Commission on Elections and Referenda.

3. The registration of UTO fighters continued in the districts immediately east of Dushanbe but was interrupted by serious clashes at the end of March. They were preceded by attacks against government positions in and near Komsomolabad on 9 and 12 March. On 17 and 18 March government positions were attacked at Faizabad, resulting in casualties. Those incidents were investigated by UNMOT and the Commission on National Reconciliation (CNR), following complaints by the Government to UNMOT. The Government accused a UTO field commander operating in the Komsomolabad area of being responsible for the attacks, but no conclusive evidence was found to confirm the accusation. For its part, UTO complained that the Government had purposely provoked its personnel by making unwarranted arrests. UTO leaders have confirmed that its field commanders in the area have continued to recruit fighters.

4. The situation deteriorated on 24 March, when opposition fighters attacked a police unit in Kofarnikhon, killing six servicemen. The Government brought in reinforcements, and extended exchanges of fire ensued. An UNMOT/CNR team went to the area to establish the facts and to stabilize the situation. However, it was compelled to return to Dushanbe after getting caught in crossfire. The next day an opposition group attacked and overran an army unit near Romit, 20 kilometres east of Kofarnikhon, killing a number of soldiers and taking more than 100 prisoner. According to government reports, as many as 40 persons were killed on those two days, and 17 are still missing. A statement made on 25 March through my spokesman condemned those attacks and called upon the UTO leaders to withdraw their personnel, and also urged the Government and UTO to work together in order to restore law and order, in accordance with their commitments under the peace accords.

5. Mr. Gerd D. Merrem, my Special Representative, worked closely with the Government, UTO, CNR and the Contact Group of guarantor States and organizations to contain the crisis. A ceasefire was established on 25 March and held, except for exchanges of fire on 29 and 30 March. On 29 March CNR, in the presence of the Contact Group, agreed to the following: release of prisoners, disengagement of forces, garrisoning of UTO fighters in the area without delay and an investigation to determine responsibility. The same day, the opposition released 16 government soldiers. After further tense and difficult negotiations in which the Chief Military Observer of UNMOT participated, another 73 soldiers were released on 30 March and 16 more on 1 April. On 5 April the parties began the simultaneous withdrawal of forces to the positions existing on 23 March. The disengagement was monitored by a high-level group, including CNR Chairman Nuri, Deputy Chairman Abdumadjid Dostiev and members of UNMOT.

6. The registration of UTO fighters in the Kofarnikhon area resumed shortly afterwards. A total of 4,335 fighters have been registered so far in all areas, 899 of them at Magmurud and in three locations in the Kofarnikhon district. However, the fighters do not stay permanently in the assembly areas; most of them live at home with their families. Only 1,562 weapons have been registered and only some of those are stored in the assembly areas. UNMOT has raised this matter repeatedly with CNR, and the Contact Group expressed its concern about it in a statement issued on 1 May.

7. On 29 April severe fighting broke out between elements of UTO and government forces between Teppei-Samarkandi and Dushanbe, including the eastern portions of the capital itself. The fighting appears to have been triggered by the arrest of three UTO members on criminal charges. UNMOT worked closely with the Contact Group to defuse the situation. In a televised broadcast, UTO deputy leader Akbar Turajonzodah stated that the armed actions were not endorsed by the UTO leadership and called upon the field commander responsible to cease fire. On 1 May, I expressed serious concern about this flare-up of hostilities, noting that it carried the risk of acceleration and called upon the Government and UTO to work together to stop all fighting and to restore calm. On 2 May President Rakhmonov chaired a meeting of the Government and UTO in which Mr. Turajonzodah was appointed to lead a special commission established to restore the ceasefire, achieve the withdrawal of government troops to their barracks and of opposition fighters to assembly areas, and set up joint Ministry of Interior and 25th army battalion checkpoints and patrols. The 25th battalion

comprises the 460 UTO personnel stationed in Dushanbe when CNR took up its work there. A ceasefire began to take hold on 3 May, and as at the date of the present report the situation remained quiet but tense.

8. Slow implementation of the amnesty law has contributed to the reluctance of UTO personnel to go to the assembly areas. To date, CNR has reviewed 1,370 cases and referred them to the Government for action. Of those, 399 persons have received amnesty. One reason for the slow pace are differences of opinion over the application of article 4 of the Amnesty Law, which excludes from amnesty persons accused of terrorism, banditry, smuggling, large-scale embezzlement of public funds, premeditated murder, sexual assault and crimes involving narcotics.

9. There have been no new developments concerning the revision of the Constitution. Draft laws on political parties and public associations are to be taken up at the next session of Parliament, scheduled to begin on 21 May, although they are not yet listed on the agenda.

10. Although the clashes in March and April/May were contained quickly, they reinforced the mistrust between the two sides, which continued to complicate and delay the implementation of the peace agreement. UTO gives priority to power-sharing in accordance with the 30 per cent formula, while the Government gives priority to the implementation of the military protocol and is reluctant to move forward on power-sharing and other political issues as long as UTO retains its military capacity.

11. In order to reconcile the competing priorities of the parties, Mr. Merrem and his staff have advised them to proceed in a balanced manner, setting themselves concrete intermediate goals. On 21 April the Contact Group issued a press release in which it urged the parties to complete by 31 May the first phase of the military protocol, that is, the complete registration and garrisoning of the UTO fighters in the assembly areas and the appointment of UTO representatives to the remaining eight positions in the central Government. It also set a deadline of 30 April for the Government to provide to CNR a list of the persons amnestied so far and of the pending cases, the approval of the draft concept paper on constitutional amendments and the forming of the Central Electoral Commission with 25 per cent UTO participation. On 29 April CNR adopted its own detailed timetable. It envisages, by July, the appointment of UTO representatives at all levels of Government in accordance with the 30 per cent formula, the full implementation of the military protocol and, consequently, the lifting of the ban on certain political parties, the formation of the Electoral Commission, the drafting of constitutional amendments and the return of all refugees from abroad.

12. The Government has created a unit for the coordination of post-conflict rehabilitation projects, which administers a $10 million credit allocated by the World Bank. The unit deals with immediate general budgetary needs associated with the peace agreement as well as specific reconstruction projects in the Karategin Valley, such as the repair or rebuilding of bridges and roads and the rehabilitation of social infrastructure (schools, hospitals, etc.) and other infrastructure damaged during the war.

13. Projects in support of the demobilization of fighters have been elaborated by UNMOT and United Nations agencies and services. One of the priorities is the creation of jobs through labour-intensive projects for the rehabilitation of the infrastructure in the Kofarnikhon and Garm districts and in the Karategin Valley. The United States Agency for International Development has indicated its willingness to fund such projects. Other projects include vocational training and start-up packages for reintegration into civilian life. Funding is being sought from the countries that pledged contributions at the donor conference held in Vienna on 24 and 25 November 1997. It is also relevant to mention ongoing programmes by the United Nations Office for Project Services and the Agha Khan Foundation, which provide assistance for farming on leased land.

14. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees continued the repatriation of refugees from Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan. As at mid-April, 800 Tajik refugees (out of an estimated total of 3,000) had been repatriated from Turkmenistan, and repatriation from Kyrgyzstan, which harbours approximately 16,000 Tajik refugees, had begun.

## III. SECURITY

15. The security situation continued to give cause for concern. In addition to the events described above, there were numerous incidents in Dushanbe and vicinity which, while not involving United Nations personnel, demonstrated the continuing volatility of the situation. During the efforts to end the clashes in March and April/May, there were also clear indications that the UTO leaders exercised only limited control over some of their field commanders. Difficulties in this regard were also noticed on the government side, although they were less pronounced.

16. Detailed discussions were held in January and February with the Collective Peacekeeping Forces of CIS, in which a number of options for security assistance were identified. The commander of the CIS Peacekeeping Forces was to seek instructions from his superiors on the subject and then revert to UNMOT.

17. The special unit of army and former UTO members that is to provide security for United Nations personnel has been slow to take shape, and the Defence Minister's formal directive for the establishment of the unit was signed only on 9 April. Training of the unit's officers began in mid-March and has now been completed. The trainers were made available to UNMOT by the Government of Poland. The unit continues to face a shortage of essential equipment, and it is difficult to forecast when it will be operational. In the meantime, I have given instructions to re-examine other options in case these difficulties cannot be overcome.

18. It has not been possible to find premises in Dushanbe that are ready and suitable for the accommodation of United Nations offices and personnel. However, staff have been concentrated near the centre of the city, making it easier for the authorities to provide security. A range of precautions have been instituted to reduce the risk to individual staff; a night-time curfew remains in effect.

## IV. HUMANITARIAN AND REHABILITATION ACTIVITIES

19. A consolidated appeal for Tajikistan was launched in Geneva in March for a total of $34.6 million for 1998 to extend interventions undertaken in the framework of the donor alert, which expired at the end of 1997.

20. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the World Food Programme (WFP) and 10 non-governmental organizations have started to provide agricultural support for the spring planting season to more than half of the 51 districts in Tajikistan. The recent insecurity, coupled with heavy rains and landslides, however, has hampered activities in the Karategin Valley. General food distribution to the most vulnerable individuals and groups continued. WFP and other food suppliers are currently investigating the gradual phasing out of food distribution in favour of food-for-work programmes, including food production on leased land, canal clearing and road and shelter reconstruction. The Office for Project Services, the German Society for Technical Cooperation and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have improved water supply systems and irrigation schemes, especially in rural areas. Essential chemicals and spare parts continue to be supplied to Dushanbe to support ongoing typhoid prevention programmes. Flood prevention through canal clearing and rehabilitation of irrigation channels was intensified.

21. The World Bank is organizing a Joint Consultative Group meeting in Paris on 20 May in order to mobilize resources for development from both bilateral donors and international financial institutions.

## V. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

22. As at April 1998, UNMOT comprised 68 military observers from Austria (5), Bangladesh (8), Bulgaria (6), Denmark (4), Ghana (4), Indonesia (4), Jordan (6), Nigeria (4), Poland (11), Switzerland (7), Ukraine (3) and Uruguay (6), and 110 civilian personnel, 35 of whom were internationally recruited. In addition to its headquarters in Dushanbe, UNMOT maintained team sites in Garm, Kalaikhumb, Khorog, Khujand and Kurgan-Tube.

23. UNMOT has remained well under its authorized strength, and in March contributors were requested to provide additional military observers. Because of the fighting in the Kofarnikhon area, action on the reinforcement was deferred. Contributors were again approached at the end of April, prior to the clashes east of Dushanbe. Since these clashes have been contained, it is intended to proceed with the reinforcement, subject to developments on the ground.

24. UNMOT maintains two helicopters, which are essential to ensure the unhindered movement of its teams and the supply of outlying stations. From the end of February to 10 March, UNMOT was without helicopter support and temporarily had to relocate teams to Dushanbe owing to extraordinary difficulties in obtaining the clearances necessary for the helicopters to operate, which lasted for two months.

25. As in the past, UNMOT cooperated closely with the office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe on matters of constitutional reform and democratization. It maintained close contact with the CIS Peacekeeping Forces regarding the maintenance of the ceasefire and security, and remained in touch with the Russian Border Forces on matters of mutual concern.

26. Mr. Merrem continued as my Special Representative. He is due to retire at the end of May, and I shall revert to the Security Council concerning his successor. Brigadier-General Boleslaw Izydorczyk (Poland) ended his assignment as Chief Military Observer on 14 April 1998. He was succeeded by Brigadier-General Tengku Ariffin Bin Tengku Mohammed (Malaysia).

## VI. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

27. The General Assembly, in its resolution 52/229 of 31 March 1998, appropriated a total amount of $15 million gross for the expansion of UNMOT for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998, which includes the amount of $8,275,700 gross already appropriated by the General Assembly in its resolution 51/237 of 13 June 1997.

28. The proposed budget for the maintenance of UNMOT from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999 (A/52/772/Add.2) is currently under consideration by the General Assembly. The cost of maintaining UNMOT for the 12-month period is estimated at $22,282,100 gross, assuming continuance of its currently authorized strength and mandate. Therefore, should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate beyond 15 May 1998, the cost of maintaining the Mission would be limited to the amounts indicated above.

29. As at 30 April 1998, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for UNMOT from the inception of the Mission to 15 May 1998 amounted to $7.2 million, which represents some 22 per cent of the assessment for the Mission. The unpaid assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations amounted to $1.6 billion.

## VII. OBSERVATIONS

30. During the past three months, progress in the peace process has been very slow, and it has become clear that the task of building confidence between the former adversaries is more difficult than anticipated and will take longer than allowed for in the ambitious timetable of the peace agreement. As a result, it now seems unlikely that elections can be held in 1998.

31. At the same time, such progress as was made, notably the appointment of six UTO representatives to the national Government and the containment of the crises in March and late April/early May, indicates the interest of both sides in continuing the peace process. There are signs of a growing realization that it is necessary to proceed in a balanced manner, taking into account the priorities of both sides. I fully support the approach adopted in this regard within the framework of the Contact Group, which has identified a number of immediate objectives, notably the completion of the first phase of the military protocol

and the appointment of UTO representatives to the remaining eight government positions to be filled by them. The contribution made by the members of the Contact Group has been crucial to the process.

32. It is clear that comprehensive international support remains essential for the continuation of the peace process. UNMOT and the other members of the United Nations system, as well as the Contact Group, provide much-needed impetus and help stabilize the situation during crises. In addition, there is a need for financial assistance to help Tajikistan, which is one of the poorest countries, on the path of reform and development. I hope that the meeting of the Consultative Group to be held by the World Bank later this month will bring positive results in this regard.

33. In the light of these considerations, I recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of UNMOT for a further period of six months, until 15 November 1998. I shall, of course, keep the Council informed of any significant developments.

34. In conclusion, I wish to pay tribute to Mr. Merrem, my Special Representative, who will be retiring at the end of May after a long and distinguished career in the service of the United Nations, to Brigadier-General Izydorczyk, who has recently returned to his national service and to all the men and women of UNMOT. They have conducted themselves in an exemplary manner in very difficult and often dangerous conditions.

وزع بعثة مراقبي الأمم المتحدة في طاجيكستان
اعتبارا من أيار/مايو ١٩٩٨
1998 年 5 月联塔观察团的部署情况
UNMOT DEPLOYMENT AS OF MAY 1998
DÉPLOIEMENT DE LA MONUT EN MAI 1998
РАЗМЕЩЕНИЕ МНООТ НА МАЙ 1998
DESPLIEGUE DE LA UNMOT EN MAYO 1998
0 25 50 75 100 km
0 25 50 75 mi
TAJIKISTAN
UZBEKISTAN
KYRGYZSTAN
CHINA
AFGHANISTAN
PAKISTAN
LENINABAD
KUHISTONI BADAKHSHON
(GORNIY BADAKSHAN)
KHATLON
Dushanbe
Khujand
(Leninabad)
Kulob
(Kulyab)
Qurghonteppa
(Kurgan-Tyube)
Kholm
(Tashkurghan)
Mazâr-e
Sharif
Khorugh
Buved
Taboshar
Kokand
Kanibadam
Bekabad
Chkalovsk
Isfara
Uroteppa
Samarkand
Shahriostan
Panjakent
Ayni
Jirgatal'
Garm
Komsomolabad
Labijar
Lairon
Childara
Kalaihussein
Wakhio
Romit
Magmurid
Obigarm
Tavildara
Sagirdasht
Kalaikhum
Kofarnikhon
Nurek
Hisor
(Gissar)
Leninski
Khovaling
Vanj
Kudara
Rangkul'
Murgab
Dangara
Kalininabad
Shuroabad
Moskovskiy
Kolkhozabad
Kabodion
Nizhniy
Panj
Shaartuz
Shir Khan
Bandar
Panj
Termez
Amu Darya
Kaiot
Rushan
Vir
Dzhartyrabot
Shaymak
Feyzabad
Kazidi
Vrang
Ishkashim
Taloqan
Qonduz
Khanabad
Samangan
Baghlan
Lake Karakul'
Lake Sarezskoye
HQ
T
UNMOT headquarters
Quartier général de la MONUT
Штаб МНООНТ
Sede de la UNMOT
Team site
Antenne de la MONUT
Базы групп на местах
Equipo
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